UNITED EVANGELICAL ACTION

DECEMBER 1961

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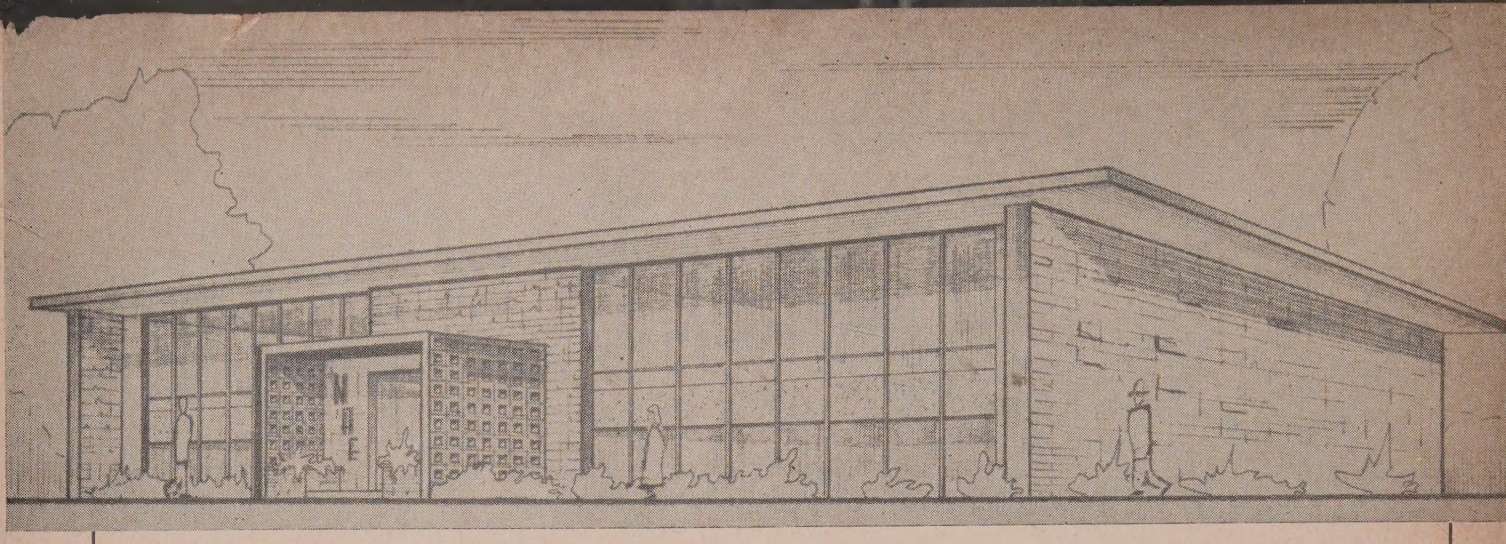
THE COMING GREAT CHURCH

PROTESTANTS AND BIBLE STUDY

THE VALIDITY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH



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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS

VOLUME 20 NUMBER 10 DECEMBER 1961

ACTION

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NAE STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative word of God.

2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

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the editor at random

LAST MONTH *The Christian Century*, a liberal (theologically and politically, that is, but not in viewpoint) Protestant weekly, spent nearly two pages blasting *Action* and one of its writers for what is termed "falsehood." The occasion for their ill-tempered remarks was Dr. James DeForest Murch's article on the World Council of Churches in our October issue. It dealt with missions and evangelism in the WCC framework. In its editorial, the *Century* took issue with practically everything in the article except the prepositions, conjunctions, commas and periods.

They called as a witness for the defense the study booklet distributed by the WCC to prepare the churches for the "great ecumenical encounter" now in progress at New Delhi. We grant that there is a lot of good warm-hearted evangelical terminology in the booklet. There has to be. If some of the rank things written by ecumenical leaders for more limited consumption had been put in this booklet for circulation to the one million homes which it is reported to have reached, there would be a grass roots revolt against the WCC that would set the present ecumenical movement back half-a-century.

We cite just one "for instance": Dr. Charles C. West, assistant director of the Ecumenical Institute of the WCC and one of the official spokesmen for the Council, wrote in his book, *Outside the Camp,* published in 1959: "He (Christ) comes to us when we are slaves in an alien household and shows us that we are children of the Father. He does all the work. It is up to us simply to accept what he has done and to live in obedient fellowship with him. It does not depend on our having a religious experience. It means, rather, that it is our business to search out what God is doing in Christ in all the spheres of life in which we live today."

We don't believe that five per cent of the people in Council-related churches believe that unscriptural tommyrot. This is one of the facts of ecumenical life which the leaders themselves have to face. They are far—too far—ahead of the people in their concepts. Thus they must pay lip service to biblical terminology in their popular writings.

The rub comes when they begin to define what they mean. Earlier this year we printed an article on "Ecumenical Strategy in Foreign Missions" by Dr. Clyde W. Taylor which substantiates from ecumenical writings the facts and conclusions in Dr. Murch's article. If you'd like the full story of what is happening in world missions behind ecumenical words and phrases, reprints are available at ten cents each or $1.00 a dozen.

Incidentally, don't fail to get a supply of the reprints of the series by Dr. Murch. They are ready now and the price is 25 cents each or $2.50 a dozen.

capital commentary

don gill REPORTING ON RELIGIOUS TRENDS FROM NAE'S OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

The dictatorial regime of Fidel Castro continues to employ Communist methods of education in Cuba. Most insidious of all the tricks used is the one involving prayer. Children are told to bow their heads at their desks, and to pray to God for candy. When they are told to look up, no candy appears. Then they bow their heads again and pray to Fidel for candy, whereupon several pieces of candy mysteriously turn up on each child's desk.

Meanwhile, Cubans continue to flee their homeland. At first it was the wealthy industrialists and large land holders who took their exit. Then, as Fidel's regime moved in on medium-sized business, the people in the middle classes fled. Now laborers and peasants are fleeing by the thousands. Most of them make their way to Florida under "waivers of visa" issued by the U. S. State Department, in consultation with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The refugee problem in Florida has become intense, with both the state and federal governments investigating the need of further measures to relieve Cuban refugees.

The U. S. State Department feels it must continue to issue the waivers for many Cubans who apply. Two major criteria for issuing waivers are: 1) to unite close families, and 2) to allow children between the ages of 5 and 21 to get an education which is not Communist-oriented. When even one child in the family is in this student category, waivers may be issued for the entire family.

The Voice of America is making an intensive effort to penetrate the iron curtain with a truth barrage. Object of one recent radio bombardment was to tell listeners behind the iron curtain of the growing world revulsion to Soviet nuclear bomb testing. The Communists employed 2000 jamming transmitters, which scurried from one frequency to another attempting to make the broadcasts unintelligible, but with only partial success. In broadcasts to Yugoslavia, the Voice recently ran a week-long contest with transistor radios as prizes, and got 18,315 letters from Yugoslav listeners in response.

Grass roots concern for new ways and means of dealing with the international Communist threat to free society is reaching Washington. But the response from government officials tends to be cautious, with don't-rock-the-boat overtones. Many experts who frame government policy have been convinced that there is no quick, short route to the defeat of Communism. We will have to learn to resist the threat over the long haul, they say. But the concern at the grass roots is spreading fast. It could figure in the 1964 election.

A substantial victory for church-state separation was registered at the polls in the New York State election. It was indicative of increased Protestant awareness, both in that state and throughout the country, that it is necessary to wade into the arena of political affairs if church and state are to be kept separate. The proposal to change the state's Constitution would have allowed state aid to private as well as public colleges. Most of the private colleges in the state are Roman Catholic. The proposal to amend the constitution was decisively defeated by up-state voters, where Protestants are in the majority. In New York City the proposal was approved by a slim margin of about four thousand votes.

Roman Catholics were recently advised by a prominent priest of their church to make it clear to non-Catholics that they are "in favor of the First Amendment's guarantees of religious liberty." But Father Thomas McDonough of Chicago also expressed the hope that the U. S. Supreme Court would eventually "interpret the First Amendment so it doesn't prevent religious freedom by requiring the imposition of a secular education upon our children."

THE VALIDITY OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

by Howard A. Hanke

DOUBT IN the virgin birth of Jesus Christ has come into frequent focus recently with such church leaders as Martin Rist, Bishop James A. Pike, and Frederick C. Grant denying its validity. It is the feeling of many Christians, however, that this view is in direct contradiction with what the historic church has understood the Scriptures to teach.

The general intent of these negative views may be summed up in a statement found in a personal letter from Harry Emerson Fosdick to H. E. Fisher of *The Christian Beacon*: "Of course I do not believe in the virgin birth . . . . and I do not know of any intelligent Christian who does."

Iliff professor Martin Rist (*The Denver Post,* Feb. 4, 1961) leaves the impression that "scientific methods" of biblical interpretation have superseded revelation and personal experience, and the belief in the virgin birth is now untenable. Bishop James A. Pike (*Time,* Feb. 24, 1961; *Newsweek,* Feb. 27, 1961) expressed the view that his (Episcopal) church's Articles of Religion "represent the allergic reaction of our church," and that "the virgin birth is a myth."

Frederick C. Grant, noted New Testament scholar, attempts to do away with the virgin birth by clever philosophical interpretation. Mary's recorded statement: "seeing I know not a man" and "since I have no husband" is brushed away by the simple statement that it "must have been added later" (*Translating the Bible,* Seabury Press). What's more, he claims that "the word for 'virgin' is not in the Hebrew text" (*Basic Christian Beliefs,* Board of Missions, The Methodist Church), which statement can be challenged. If no reference to the virgin birth is made in the Isaiah text it certainly puts the inspiration of Matthew in doubt (Matt. 1:22-23).

The qualifying statement in Luke 3:23, "as was supposed" gets the death blow from Grant through a clever literary device called a "gloss," which according to Webster is "a deceptive explanation."

Theologian Nels F. S. Ferre endeavors to justify the deity of Jesus within the framework that "The birth stories are, to be sure, most improbable . . . . for this reason, the simplest thing to believe may be that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus" (*The Christian Understanding of God,* Harper). And Ferre adds, "We have no way of knowing, even that Jesus was sinless, but such a claim is irrelevant to the reality of the Incarnation." Obviously, Ferre's estimation of the integrity of Scripture is somewhat different from that held by traditional Christianity.

The prominence given expressions of this kind makes it necessary for Christians who have implicit faith in their Scriptures and the creedal affirmations to be heard. It is hoped that this statement will serve as a bridge of communication between scholars holding different viewpoints, and that it will result in a better understanding of why belief in the doctrine of the virgin birth is essential to the spiritual well-being of those who accept *the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints* (Jude 3).

It is a historical fact that the Church has confessed belief in the doctrine of the virgin birth from early times. This is attested by the Apostles' Creed. Today, we confess our belief in this doctrine, not because of creedal authority, but because of our confidence in the Apostolic witness and the Scripture truth which it embodies. Furthermore, the doctrine of the virgin birth is more consistent with the miraculous life, work and teaching of Jesus Christ than any other explanation of the Incarnation.

Scholars are agreed that no doctrinal changes are necessary because of newly discovered manuscripts. The committee of translators for the Revised Standard Version states that "no doctrine of the Christian faith has been affected by the revision, for the simple reason that, out of thousands of variant readings in the manuscripts, none has turned up thus far that requires a revision of Christian doctrine," (*The Greek Text of the New Testament,* introducing the New Testament RSV). It can be concluded from this that the traditional doctrine of the virgin birth certainly has not been seriously affected.

It can also be pointed out that the testimony of the Church Fathers, who lived so near the Apostolic Period, had not changed with regard to the virgin birth. The witness of these authorities is clear and certain. Irenaeus, in about A. D. 190, affirms the place the doctrine of the virgin birth had in the church of his day. In the Creed of Tertullian, a little later than Irenaeus, the virgin birth holds the same secure position. Justin Martyr and Ignatius are among the Church Fathers affirming this important doctrine. Should we ignore the testimony of belief during a time which was in such close proximity to the Apostolic Period and accept so-called "scientific investigative techniques"?

Kenneth Scott Latourette points out in *A History of Christianity* that the traditional doctrines about Christ were challenged by Celsus, Porphyry, Marcion, Basilides and Alexandria, and Valentinus, but it should be noted that none of these critics were ever in the main body of the Church. Moreover, the opponents of the traditional doctrine of Christ have neither an historical tradition of their own to support their claim, nor a supporting frame of reference from their writings for their own conclusions.

Where, then, is the basis for doubting the validity of the virgin birth? Has some scientific discovery been made that makes the virgin birth less possible than before? Edwin Lewis, the former professor of systematic theology at Drew University, sums it up in these words: "The virgin birth of Jesus Christ and his Resurrection . . . . neither of these two elements of the Christian faith has anything whatever to do with science. They are not presented for scientific verification . . . . science as such, is equally important to prove or disprove Christian truth."

(Please turn to page 16)

PROTESTANTS AND BIBLE STUDY

With guilty indifference and laziness we effectively close the Book and still the voice of God, the author charges

by Lloyd H. Knox

PROTESTANTS stand in a special relationship to the Bible. Historically, the role of the Bible has been dominant in the life of Protestants, for they assume both the privileges and the responsibilities of direct relationship with God and firsthand contact with the Bible.

The Bible is important to the Roman Catholic. However, it has a secondary role, with tradition taking precedence. The Protestant gives to the Bible a determinative role. This does not deny significance to tradition. It does place it in a secondary and derivative relationship to the Bible. Traditions may be cherished only as they reflect or are consistent with the Bible.

The practical result of the Catholic view is best seen in the matter of interpreting Scripture. Their principle denies any interpretation that might conflict with or reflect upon an established teaching of the church. This in effect places the Church above its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and above His Word.

The opposite—and Protestant—view places the Author and the Word above the Church. It brings the searchlight of the Person and His Word to play constantly upon our collective or individual interpretation as either confirmation or corrective. This is a dynamic, on-going process. It makes possible a creative use of the Bible. It opens the door for new insights under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, yet guards against untrammeled mysticism in which each person becomes a religious end-in-himself, an undisturbed self-interpreter of the Word. The individual and the Church (Christ's body) need both the corrective and the assurance that come from a fresh and continuous exposure to the Scriptures.

It is obvious that clear thinking about Bible study must view the church as the steward rather than the lord of Scripture. This does not relieve the Church from responsibility though it does define and limit the scope of responsibility.

Because the Church is steward of the Scripture it has a duty to preserve it physically and in its integrity against book destroyers and emasculators. It has a duty to translate it into the vernacular, and into life. It likewise has a duty to understand and interpret the Scripture. (See Bernard Ramm's *Special Revelation and the Word of God,* p. 191 ff. Eerdmans, 1961.)

This brings sharply into focus our concept of the Church as a body which has Christ as head, the Holy Spirit as life, and the Bible as rule of faith and conduct. The Church as such a body must never impose itself upon Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the Bible. Rather, in these must be found its directions and life.

As we shall see, this has direct bearing on how we should approach our study of the Bible. And it follows that there is no person, pope, or people to be placed above teaching from the Scripture. It must speak freshly and repeatedly to all of us. This cannot be a once-for-all matter. The message does not shift, but the perspective and application must relate to the contemporary and the popular needs.

The Church—Roman or evangelical—must never so view itself or the Scripture that it has nothing left to learn. Neither can it safely and dogmatically claim that what it says is identical with what God's Word is. Protestant history is replete with evidence that repeatedly the Church is in need of being told something by the Bible. J. K. S. Reid has observed, "Freedom to study the Bible has nothing essentially to do with freedom of thought; it has to do with a free Bible." And it must be reasserted that the Bible is not "free" if it cannot speak to our minds in any new way, or with new light, if everything is set and solidified in an unbreakable mold.

Reid also observes that the Roman Church indulges in a monologue with itself as "the sole authoritative and incorrigible speaker. The Roman Church is confronted in the last resort with nothing other than what it itself says." Let evangelicals beware lest they face a similar indictment! Bible study for the individual and the group must have as its objective "thus saith the Lord."

While a "free" Bible is necessary to Bible study, an essential corollary is a "free" Christian. A free Bible demands a free student. Being a Protestant requires a high degree of individual responsibility—a responsibility to think, to inquire, to know for one's self.

A Protestant cannot be content with intellectual, moral or spiritual hand-me-downs. He values and maintains his God-given critical faculties. He does not exercise these faculties in any degree of arrogance or self-will, but with a clear sense of dependence on the Creator. But just as clearly, he understands his responsibility for the intensive use of his God-endowed capacities in search of truth.

His attitude may be described as scientific—a determination to let the object speak for itself. He is not afraid to let God speak through the Bible. He guards against an approach to Bible study filled with prejudgment and prejudice. He is willing to follow any logical or technical rules which will help the Bible speak for itself.

Dr. Knox is president of the National Sunday School Association and publisher for the Free Methodist Church.

In other words, he recognizes a need for guidance in how to study in order to hear and understand the truth in the message. This infers an inductive and direct approach to Bible study as being characteristic of the Protestant attitude and method. It is not surprising then if Protestantism is sympathetic to general reading of Scripture, but is also insistent upon study. This is essential to a "free" Christian.

The Protestant faith is not for the non-thinker. Non-thinkers are free to choose a non-thinker's church where decisions are determined by those in authority. Many people find a great sense of relief in this arrangement. They are overwhelmed by the decisions of life, the demands for critical, thoughtful evaluation of perplexing problems. They remind one of Huxley's wish that he were a clock that could simply be wound up each morning and thus escape the responsibilities of being a moral person. Those to whom study, thinking and critical evaluation are too demanding are not suited to a Protestant church.

Those who will not respond to the demanding call to be sons of God, will of necessity be less than men sinking to the level of living typified as "bovine." The tragedy of these words is the haunting suspicion that many of the bovine variety are hangers-on in Protestant circles. They want to have the preacher or the Discipline or rule book of the church determine every good and bad thing in life, leaving no gray, difficult areas for personal struggle and decision. How many created in the likeness of the Creator resent the struggle of being a morally responsible person!

It is not enough, therefore, to encourage the Protestant to an easy reading of the Bible. If he is to maintain his privileges he must become a responsible student of God's Word. He must know for himself what it is the Lord says. Only this can create a people with backbone, unshakable convictions, and a sense of direction living in constant victory.

It is difficult to see a direct relationship between a free Bible, a free man and a free society?

The United Nations is a contemporary example of a "tower of Babel" attempt to secure human values. This is not to decry the idea of a union of nations, but to lament its insufficient foundation which is incapable of supporting so bold and magnificent a super-structure. It is what Trueblood characterizes as a "cut-flower" civilization. It may be attractive for a while, but is doomed to fade and decay. Only God through a free Word is sufficient for our frightening contemporary global structure. It is clear that renewed emphasis on serious Bible study is imperative!

God creates history. Therefore it should not be amazing that He speaks to us through history nor that He uses it for His own purposes which are redemptive. God used Egypt for Exodus. Then He fastened on this great event to emphasize, extend and interpret it redemptively for all men in the passion of our Lord.

It is difficult for us moderns with the Bible so readily available to realize that it has been a relatively short time since only a few laymen or clergy had access to the Bible. Further, the Bible was closed by general illiteracy and the fact that it was in Latin. The printing press and translation into the vernacular inaugurated a new intellectual and spiritual era. It is no wonder the sixteenth century became a dramatic turning point. We Protestants owe an incalculable debt to the printing press and translators.

To make every Christian a Bible student is our only protection against encroaching isms with their damning errors. No Christian can afford to delegate this responsibility to priest, preacher, council or synod. No Christian can afford to park his brains outside the church or Sunday school of his choice.

Have we forgotten how important Bible study is to our very existence as free evangelicals? Do we think we can afford to live off the capital of other generations or ride on the momentum others have provided? Then a rude awakening is ahead!

Like our freedoms, the Bible can be lost through indifference.

Political or religious tyrants can effectively seal our Bibles. The current tragedy is that we are doing this very thing ourselves. No tyrant is needed. With guilty indifference and laziness we effectively close the Book and still the voice of God. It is no secret that many Protestants professing a superior brand of religion cannot be persuaded either to read or study systematically and diligently in God's Word.

Many resent being urged to prepare for a sharing period in the Sunday school class. No wonder many adult Sunday school classes are more like a club of the indigent weekly (weakly) pooling their ignorances—the same ignorances—than a vital, dynamic search for exciting and practical Christian truths. It is no wonder that outreach is impossible, and these classes are easily passed by as being utterly irrelevant.

Most Bibles today are closed not by tyrants, but by the dust of indifference, or the unintelligent and casual reading of the Scripture with never a thought that here is a Book worthy of and demanding serious study by everyone.

A new Reformation is needed. Such a reform would involve a first-hand, direct, inductive study of the Bible by every person calling himself Christian.

Such a reform is a prerequisite to all other reforms. Is it too much to assert that this reform would be the prelude to other reforms deepening the spiritual life of the Church in prayer and service? Is this the way to making effective the doctrine and practice of corollary truth—the prophethood of believers?

If we are to reach and transform our era it will need this combination of reform. The minister as a special and essential functionary in the church cannot do the job. Every believer must see himself—as in fact he is—a priest and a prophet. How we need those who go from men and seek God's face on their behalf! And how we need those who go from His face with His Word for them!

This would be a new Reformation indeed.

Should a Protestant simply read—or study the Bible? Both—of course! And pity the person who cannot and does not read it for pleasure. Many have discovered that the wide variety of different versions and translations, far from being confusing, have made the Bible a more understandable book and reading a more pleasurable experience. I, like many others, have found that often a jabbing, stabbing truth will come to me through a new trans-

(Please turn to page 14)

BIBLE STUDY — HOW ARE WE DOING?

A few Protestants are undoubtedly doing well in their Bible studies, but the reports on Bible reading among Protestant church members as a whole are not heartening. The percentage of people who actually study their Bibles must be much less than the mere readers. Most adult Sunday school classes are disappointing and the most frequent question teachers ask is, "How can I get adults to study their Bible?"

What is needed is more guidance on how to study the Bible. While such material is available it needs more promotion by pastors and Sunday school leaders. When properly used techniques will make Sunday school become alive and interesting. Better leadership must also be provided in study and discussion because timid leadership which is afraid of questioning minds and discordant ideas effectively closes the door to truth. Finally, all those who are unwilling to study the Bible should be herded into one dull class so they won't hinder the rest who are anxious to get something so they can grow spiritually.

The current NAE program to "Return the Bible to the Heart of the Nation" should be a real stimulus to group and personal Bible study. It includes helps for personal Bible reading and a list of materials for group study in your church. Write this magazine for this free list.

KOREA IS HALF-A-WORLD AWAY

by Stan Mooneyham

The San Gabriel Union Church in California helps provide food for hungry Koreans through the NAE World Relief Commission as its annual Christmas benevolence project

A food distribution center in Korea

KOREA is half-a-world away from San Gabriel, California, but the members of the San Gabriel Union Church manage to help set the Christmas dinner table for hundreds of unfortunate Koreans who are victims of a still war-ravaged land.

They do this through their Christmas missionary project—a project which was started two years ago and proved to be such a blessing that it has been made an annual event.

Dr. Joseph Hemphill, pastor of the 1150-member congregation, tells about that first year: "Our missionary committee was looking around for some worthwhile project to sponsor for the Christmas season of 1959. Local projects were hard to find—those that were really worthy were being cared for by service clubs and other organizations.

"When the World Relief program of the National Association of Evangelicals was mentioned, we just felt like this was what God wanted us to do. A letter to Mr. Wendell Rockey, executive director of the World Relief Commission, brought information about the need for food in Korea. This was all our committee needed to get going."

A Korean mother cooks food from America for her family

Ron Harrington is chairman of the missionary committee. Upon learning that $473 would ship one carload of surplus food to Korea, his group decided to try for a carload. "Operation Boxcar" was underway.

A full-size canvas painting of a boxcar provided by the Santa Fe Railroad was brought to the church and—after being properly decorated for the project—was stretched behind the pulpit as a constant reminder to the congregation. A letter and special "Christmas Project" envelope went to every member.

When the offering came back in, it amounted to $1,140.20—far more than had ever been given for the community Christmas projects which had been sponsored previously. The offering—*not for one carload but for two-and-a-half carloads of food for Korea*—was sent to the World Relief Commission and the missionary committee knew it had found its Christmas project.

In 1960 a similar effort was made under the theme "Operation Chow-down." The offering was nearly $1,000, but Pastor Hemphill quickly explains that the reason for the drop was that the church had just finished a $300,000 educational plant.

Now they are looking to Christmas 1961. The interest in the "Food for Korea for Christmas" project is evidenced in the fact that the congregation sent the pastor—the missionary committee chairman went along at his own expense—to Korea early this year to survey the results of the missionary outreach of the church.

While the food program is only a small part of the $100,000 annual missionary giving of the church which helps support some 80 missionaries, Pastor Hemphill says it was a special thrill to visit some of the feeding stations in Korea where the actual food which their offering had made possible was being served.

"What we saw there made us know that our Christmas giving was the most worthwhile thing we could have done," he says. And you believe him when he says it, for there is that "half-a-world-away" look in his eyes.

For information about what your church can do for world relief, write World Relief Commission, 12-19 Jackson Ave., Long Island City 1, New York.

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES -- AN ANALYSIS

the coming great church

PART V

By James DeForest Murch

THE WORLD Council of Churches is not an end in itself; it is a means to an end. The "magnificent obsession" of Council leaders is the building of one church for one world. Ecumenists often speak of it as "The Coming Great Church."

Early in the life of the Council (Evanston, 1954), Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam made an inspired address entitled "We Intend to Stay Together." He struck this note in the opening of the Assembly and it was repeated over and over again during the 17 days of that historic meeting. The Bishop climaxed his ecumenical appeal with these words from Vachel Lindsay's "Endless Line of Splendor"—

This is our faith tremendous—
Our wild hope, who shall scorn—
That in the name of Jesus
The world shall be reborn.

There was a breathless silence over the assembly and one could feel the deep desire of many sincere hearts that all God's people might be one in our day. Then the Assembly sang "In Christ there is no East or West" and stood adjourned.

Breathes there an evangelical with soul so dead that he does not have the same desire? Yea, we should pray daily for true Christian unity and practice it in our relations with those who confess Christ in humility and truth.

To evangelicals, however, Christian unity is basically spiritual. At Evanston the prayer of our Lord in John 17 was quoted repeatedly and used as an apologetic for the modern ecumenical movement. They seemed to ignore the nature of the unity for which Christ prayed. In His high priestly prayer He said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; *as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee,* that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, *even as we are one* . . . that they may be made perfect in one" (vss. 20-23).

Christ here prays for spiritual unity. That unity was established when the Holy Spirit was poured out on all believers at Pentecost. Thus came the one body in Christ, the invisible Church, including all those who believed in Christ and who were born again. That body has never been broken; it exists today and is made manifest wherever true believers in Christ worship and unite in service.

Christian unity must, of course, be outward as well as inward. At Evanston there were many who seemed to have the idea that some sort of ecumenical device or organizational institution akin to the Roman Catholic Church might be the outward answer to our Lord's prayer. Others, while seeking outward manifestations of the inner unity, were certain that perfect fulfillment could come only with the New Jerusalem.

The current ecumenical movement is one of the most powerful and significant developments in the history of the Christian church. It is, in part, a reaction against the many divisions in Protestantism and the spirit of bigotry and intolerance manifest in the hearts of so many who call themselves Christian. In part, it arises out of a new world unity among the nations and the breaking down of physical barriers which formerly encouraged ignorance and misunderstanding.

In the words of Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the WCC, "the real motivation of the ecumenical movement was a sense of repentance that in the actual life of the churches the holiness, the apostolicity, the unity of the Church has been obscured; and a determination to manifest more clearly the true nature of the Church of Christ."

There is nothing wrong with this. There is *everything right* with it. In so far as the World Council manifests this desire and adheres to the biblical concept of the unity which is in Christ, it is contributing to the accomplishment of God's purpose for His Church.

The gigantic undertaking of bringing 176 churches together in one ecclesiastical organization poses innumerable problems. The degree of diversity in doctrine, polity and worship would seem to indicate that ecumenicity cannot be achieved on any of these levels alone. There are trinitarian churches and unitarian churches. There are liberals, conservatives and middle-of-the-roaders of all sorts. There are churches which believe in the "apostolic succession" of their clergy, churches which have a "free, God-called" ministry, and some who recognize no special clerical leadership. There are those who accept the authority of the Bible alone, and others who give equal allegiance to church tradition.

In theology there are Catholics, conservative Protestants, liberal Protestants, radical Protestants, neo-orthodox, Anglican—with new types being born every day. There are Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, Eastern Orthodox and Unitarians. There are congregational, presbyterian, episcopal and catholic systems of polity. There are national churches and free churches. There are pietistic and corporate concepts of the Christian life. There are a dozen basically different rites of communion and worship, each believed

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AND EVALUATION

Both history and recent events point up the push toward merger

to be sacrosanct. There are racial and nationalist traditions, Occidental and Oriental.

How do ecumenical leaders propose to accomplish their purpose? It is impossible here to speak with authority, but enough has been said and done to indicate goals and strategy.

Speaking broadly, ecumenists conceive of the Church as an evolutionary development. It began in the mind of Christ. Its corporate continuity was assured in the living spirit of the twelve apostles and has been maintained without break until the present day. The apostolic church, they say, had no clear pattern which was to be preserved and perpetuated. In fact, the New Testament Church was far from a model of perfection. It was riddled with conflict, shortcomings and uncertainties, despite the efforts of good men to set it in order.

In the second century, they say, the Apostles' Creed and a form of episcopal leadership evolved which have essential value. They see the New Testament as incidental to the developing Church, and while valuable for research and study it is of no greater importance than church tradition. Both must be subordinated to the living spirit of the Church and the mind of Christ, which have expressed and will continue to express His purpose for His Church.

The time has come, say the ecumenists, for the churches to prepare themselves to offer up some of their accustomed, inherited forms of doctrine and life and unite with others of like desires "without complete certainty as to all that will emerge" from such an adventure. They are pleading with churchmen in all churches to abandon their "safe tenets of biblical doctrine" and the "outworn creeds of Christendom" and "take to the trail through the wilderness of this world" to "reach the frontiers of a united church."

They say we are in a day of "ecumenical reformation" in which a "new confessionalism" and a "new theology" must be produced. All this can be accomplished if Christians believe, pray and act concertedly. These advocates of the Coming Great Church point to the tremendous fact of the burgeoning World Council itself, an achievement which could not have been thought possible fifty years ago, as proof that the impossible can be done.

American liberals are hopeful of a revolution which could upset the status quo and create a state of flux out of which might come a new creation. Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, in his Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale, published in the volume *What Is Christianity?,* branded Protestantism as a "heresy" and called for a new Catholicity. Bishop Oxnam, who is credited with drafting the first practical blueprint for the World Council, wrote a book, *On the Rock,* which sets forth his hopes for The Coming Great Church. His church would by-pass all the basic tenets of evangelical Christian doctrine. He disparages "apostolic succession, immersion, ritual, episcopacy, second blessing, ruling elders and much more" which he considers barriers to ecumenicity.

Oxnam would first effect inclusive cooperative action in the realm of church functions. Next, he would create an ecumenical ministry acceptable in all the churches. He says he would gladly submit to reordination if that were required. Quote: "I would gladly kneel in a service of mutual sharing in which the blessings of the differing ordinations might be conferred on me. It would be for me a sacred and heart-warming moment to have the hands of Harry Emerson Fosdick placed upon my head and the independence of the Baptist tradition symbolically passed on to me; and similarly to receive from Henry Sloane Coffin the rich traditions, the clear thought and the democratic spirit of the Presbyterians; from Henry Knox Sherrill all that lies in the concept of the historic episcopate; from Rufus Jones, if he were still with us, the insights of the silences, the concerns that come from infinite communion with the Eternal; and to have bestowed upon me as blessings all that the others who might participate possess."

The Bishop does not stop at this. He sees himself kneeling before "a common altar (with the Roman Church)" and "sharing in the Bread and Wine of Holy Communion," rising in the Spirit of Christ "to form the Holy Catholic Church to which all Christians may belong."

But wise ecumenists are not thinking in terms of revolution. They prefer a spiritually oriented search for an inclusive, workable ecclesiastical device. Some interesting ventures are being made.

Church families are beginning to merge. Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and others have been uniting at national levels and now, through World confessional groups, are moving within the orbit of the WCC to unite on the world level. This marks progress but it only reduces the number of denominations and leaves the basic ecumenical problem still unsolved.

National churches are in the process of being created. The so-called "younger churches" of the Orient are the roots of this development, inasmuch as there is in these areas less church tradition to be scrapped and foreign missionaries are more conscious of the necessity for unity in face of powerful antagonistic forces. The Church of South India is the finest example of this approach to the problem of a united ecumenical church. A similar project is being pushed in Madagascar.

First, a council of churches is formed. This may or may not include the foreign missionary operations of the area. In some areas there are enough independent national churches to form an effective council of churches. In others, national or regional missionary councils dating back to 1910 have to be converted into councils of churches. Second, the group is sold on the idea that "cooperation is not enough."

Conciliar unity must give way to churchly unity. Then, study groups are formed and the World Council is asked to come into the picture to guide them in discovering the means by which a united church can be formed.

Along with this national church development new regional groupings are beginning to appear. The Near East Christian Council, the East Asia Christian Conference, and the All-Africa Church Conference are examples. The "national churches" would conceivably find in these regional ecumenical bodies a closer and better articulated fellowship in the Coming Great Church. It is not clear to the observer just how these regional bodies will operate in the world church, but for the present they are serving an ecumenical purpose that must be quite clear in the minds of the ecclesiastical planners. All groups which enter these regional bodies will be eventually pressured to become a part of the ecumenical church.

The problem of setting up a great national church in lands like the USA is a staggering one, but the ecumenical leaders are hard at work to solve it. In America the "church family" stage is almost passed. The National Council is becoming more and more of a superchurch, with functional operations of the member churches in New York.

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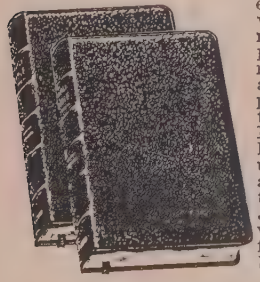

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for the future is the so-called "Blake Proposal" to unite the Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal and Congregational (United Church of Christ) churches. It is interesting to note that these are the same ecclesiastical bodies which united to form the Church of South India in 1947.

It may be well to examine the rough draft of the Blake Proposal, which might bring together 17 million Protestants. It was proposed in a sermon by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, preached in Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike's Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, the day before the opening of the annual meeting of the NCC in that city (1960). Everything was unofficial, as far as the public was concerned, but in reality much planning by top eccelesiastics had preceded the event. The rough draft included:

A "Catholic" phase. The new church would take its place in the historic stream of evolutionary development, acknowledging its relationship to the church before and after the Reformation. This "reunited" body would provide for the reconsecration of all its bishops, presbyters and ministers, to make certain that they are in "the apostolic succession." It would confess belief in the Trinity and administer two sacraments—the Eucharist and Baptism.

A "Reformation" phase. The new church would accept the principle of continuing reformation "under the Word of God by the guidance of the Holy Spirit." The government of the church would be "democratic" to recapture the sense of brotherhood and fellowship which existed in the apostolic church.

An "Evangelical" phase. This idea was not proposed at San Francisco, but added by Dr. Blake's Presbyterian General Assembly when it approved the proposal. It probably refers to the church's mission and message and involves its commitment to the Holy Scriptures and the historic creeds. But what are these matters between brethren in the ecumenical fellowship? Bishop Pike says he would accept even the Apostles' Creed in a sort of doxological sense, if he would be allowed to sing it in the liturgy of worship and to gloss over some of its theological implications.

Promoters of the plan believe that the things which separate these churches, although once matters of intense conviction, no longer are of deep concern. In the changing atomic age most traditions are being scrapped. Church leaders, after years of experience in inter-faith conference, have a subtle awareness of what is central in theological commitment and what is non-essential. They believe that both the clergy and laity are much more concerned about a pragmatic, workable program of action which will strengthen Christianity in its impact against secularism.

It is believed that it may take ten years or more to actually effect the organic union of these four bodies, but the effort will be eminently worthwhile. Methodist Bishop John Wesley Lord, one of the enthusiastic advocates of the Blake Plan, says, "We can no longer afford the luxury of our separate ways. Unification will be the most difficult task of the century. It is easier and more satisfying to live one's religious experience in the context of old and accepted beliefs. But the church, or communion, or denomination is never self-sufficient, and must not succumb to this illusion. It is not a question of timing. The peril is in delay."

Americans are being rapidly conditioned to take their place in the "One Church for the One World."

One of the most interesting proposals in the search for a workable ecumenical device is that of Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, for many years the Archbishop of Canterbury—a "commonwealth of churches" under a single head.

After offering an "apologetic" for his history-making visit to Pope John XXIII, Dr. Fisher proceeded to deal with the problems confronting the ecumenical movement. He felt that theological problems were no longer a hindering factor

He said, "Churches within the bounds of the catholic creeds can be like-minded without being tied forever to the definitions or the formulas of each particular age. . . . Must we not praise God that in our day argument and counter-argument between churches from prepared positions is giving way to discussion between disciples of Christ in which every position is open to inspection and all doctrinal issues are examined with frankness . . ."

The main problem, said the Archbishop, was "reconciliation of jurisdictions, authorities and concordats, so that within the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church the particular churches of Christendom may be duly related to one another in terms of coordination and full communion." It was in this difficult area that he saw the possibility of first applying the "commonwealth principle" and moving on from that point.

Union with Roman Catholicism may be a century or more away, but it is certainly within the purview of the ecumenical leaders. Romanists have on a number of occasions expressed appreciation of the Council's efforts to create a centralized responsible ecclesiastical government. A "Secretariat for

Unity" has now been set up at the Vatican which is authorized to conduct correspondence and conversations with non-Roman bodies. Officials from the Secretariat are now attending WCC meetings as observers. It is possible that non-Roman observers may be permitted to attend the forthcoming Ecumenical Council of the Roman Church. It might well be that liberalizing legislation could pave the way for spiritual unity with Rome. Already various rites, orders, liturgies and practices are recognized as valid, provided the supreme authority of the Pope is acknowledged.

Such well-marked trends cause evangelicals to fear the Coming Great Church. They know that history records the tragic story of how the churches once before moved toward totalitarian ecclesiastical government. Shall we recall that history?

There were five great ecclesiastical Sees of equal authority when St. Gregory was elected Bishop of Rome in 590 A.D. This shrewd ecclesiastic favored having the three Sees of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch joined in supremacy. It was just a step toward the idea of the Divine Autocracy of the Bishop of Rome, but the significance of it did not appear to have entered the minds of most church leaders at this point. Two hundred and fifty years later came the "False Decretals," including "The Donation of Constantine," which laid the groundwork for increasing the power of the bishops and magnifying the authority of the Pope. These documents were not seriously used until about 1050 A.D., by Leo IX. Then came the years of blood and tears in which the evangelical faith was well-nigh destroyed. How harmless appeared the work of the early church councils! How innocuous the pretensions of Gregory! But how desolating the results!

Of course everybody in the World Council of Churches denies any intention of setting up a "super-church." Take, for instance, the sincere statement of Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, the Council's executive secretary, made before the Amsterdam Assembly. In answer to the fearful evangelicals in England, The Netherlands and America, he said: "Now that the Council actually comes into existence our just task is to make it clear to ourselves and to the world what our coming together does and does not mean.

"The *functions* of the Council should therefore be defined as clearly as possible. The very fact that we are building a wholly new type of inter-church fellowship, for which there are no precedents in church history, means that our plans are easily misunderstood. One tenacious misunderstanding is that this Council seeks to become a superchurch, a centre of ecclesiastical power, which will seek to control the churches adhering to it. Our constitution makes it as clear as possible that the Council has no such intention and claims no such authority.

"Moreover, anyone who has worked in the ecumenical field knows that the slightest attempt to exercise such control is bound to meet with detemined resistance on the part of our churches which share the same strong sense of independence. It will, however, be useful to state again in the most unequivocal manner possible what the Provisional Committee has already declared in 1947, namely, that we repudiate the notion of the Council becoming a centralized adminstrative authority."

The Secretary is fully as sincere as was Gregory, and the Romish saint would probably have as vigorously decried super-church designs in his day. The trouble with these ecumenists is that they are unable to read the dangerous implications of their thinking.

We have presented some of the well-authenticated facts about the World Council which have led evangelicals to oppose it. Shall we summarize?

1. Setting itself up as an "ecumenical" ecclesiasticism, the Council has refused to adopt as a basis of fellowship the absolute minimum of fundamental evangelical Christian doctrine necessary to such a body.

2. It has committed itself to the institutional concept of Christian unity —a generally acceptable human scheme or device which will achieve united action.

3. It has admitted into its membership a host of "liberals" who are committed to a theology and philosophy which are definitely anti-Christian in the biblical sense.

4. It has created an organization which to all intents and purposes is under the control of an "oligarchy." Real control lies in the hands of a few men who are definitely "liberal" in their viewpoint.

5. The ramifications of the Council are such that it is already beginning to function as a "super-church," bringing pressures or exerting controls over both members and non-member churches.

6. Its concept of the nature of the Church, the character of Christ, the Holy Scriptures, and of essential doctrine is inadequate.

7. It has seriously threatened the development of a distinctly evangelical missionary program and formed alliances which will further secularize the whole missionary movement.

8. It has encouraged social revolution. It meddles in national and international politics imperiling the status of the churches and the peace of the world.

9. Its relations with the Eastern Orthodox churches and its friendliness toward the Roman Catholic Church threaten to weaken if not destroy the distinctive testimony of Protestantism.

10. In its emphasis upon unity for unity's sake it is blurring the Church's obligation to maintain its apostolic purity in doctrine and life and to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth for the conversion of lost sinners.

In view of this situation, evangelicals are compelled to seek other means of implementing their desire for Christian unity and cooperation — media which do not require compromise of the clear teachings of God's Word concerning the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

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Bible Study

(Continued from page 7)

lation, particularly with the Phillips translation.

The Bible is fascinating in its change of pace, scenery, style and color. It is a book to intrigue, to tantalize, to excite and draw one on. It is superb drama.

It is a book that finds us deeply within. But its richest treasures are unfolded to those who study. Only by true study can there be a kind of analysis and synthesis which leads to maximum understanding of any book. And a book or thesis must be seen in its parts before it can be put together and seen as a whole. Yet there is a sense in which its parts can only be understood as we have encompassed the whole. Read it? Yes, but by all means study. Make it what it is—the Christian's textbook.

The approach suggested rules out of a Protestant concept anything bordering on bibliolatry or the magical. The Word is supernatural, but not magical. Ramm defines biblical bibliolatry as "that forgetful adulation of Scripture as if it were the first reality of the Christian faith." He observes that the first reality is rather "that which God has done in history to redeem us to Himself."

The Bible is not a wand to be waved, or something like a good-luck charm. It is not cherished as though it were something in itself to be worshipped. Nor is the reading of so many verses or chapters meritorious as such; nor does memorization of certain verses or carrying the Bible assure the special consideration of Deity. Reading and rote memorization will not do. The Protestant sees the Bible as an intelligent, understandable communication from God to man that demands the best of his intelligent, understanding and sensitive response.

The Protestant does not approach Bible study naively unaware of problems. He recognizes that any translating poses grave communication problems, which are certainly not lessened by the lack of original manuscripts. His problems relate also to the variety and sometimes the strangeness of the literature, for example, the apocalyptic literature. There are other problems. Chronology is often difficult because the purpose of the writing seldom required a rigid chronological presentation.

The objective is a higher one. The facts are usually there but careful study and often much extra-biblical knowledge is needed to put the puzzle together satisfactorily. Such problems are not noted to discourage, but rather to

encourage a more serious, intelligent and dedicated approach to Bible study.

Study—a lifetime of study—is needed, exciting and rewarding. For revelation is organic. It is a whole. Each word of God is part of the one Word of God. Each passage of Scripture has, in a very real sense, the whole Bible as its context. The eager pursuit of proof-texts to bolster prejudices is hence seen for the vain and shallow thing it is, as well as an unreliable approach.

Study is essential, for this alone will unlock the great truths to which we come in the scientific (and sanctified) mood—willing to see all the truth, and ready to let it lead where it will. This is honest inductive study. If the Bible will not support a position or a desire you have cherished, you must be willing to let the Bible change you and change your position. Such honesty is needed by every shade of evangelical theology, and more of it would likely lead to greater theological unity and depth. It certainly would devastate pride.

We must study the Bible because it is the interpreter of the great redemptive events. It makes meaningful the great acts of God.

We must study the Bible because it is an antidote for intellectual, moral and spiritual blindness, for ignorance and stupidity caused by sin. Here is the answer to man's impurity, guilt, death and enmity to God. Your spiritual life literally depends on this study.

We must study the Bible because of our interest in a united church. Unless this concerns us we are less Christian than Christ wants us to be for He prayed for the unity of His disciples. However, our concern is for a unity above union—a unity that unites us in Christ though we function through different kinds of organizations. There is no hope for closer unity and understanding apart from Bible study in depth, clarity and honesty. As we all draw near to the fount of truth and drink deeply ever looking at our Lord who is the center of His Word, we shall become like Him and hence more like our brothers in Christ.

We should be reminded that the Bible is not a Bible-centered Book. We may well do a disservice to stress this or that as being Bible-centered when all should be Christ-centered, since the Book itself is Christ-centered.

Finally, we must study the Bible because we need to be properly armed with Scripture in our fight against the powers of darkness. No, nothing else will help to revive the Church and Christianize the conscience of America. This is our greatest need and it can only be met by an understanding in depth of God's message to man as found in the Scripture.

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No. U-1 above is Kang Soon Hee, a very attractive child of gentle nature and good health. Her father was killed by Communist bandits. Her mother disappeared shortly after and has not been heard from since. The village Chief cared for her for a short time and then brought her to Love Nurture Orphanage. In her case history was found a letter she may have written reading in part, "I thank God for this Home where I can learn about Jesus. Please pray for me that I may grow up to be a good servant of the Lord."

No. U-6 above is Han Song Chul. This dear child was born on Christmas Day 1957. After his father died, his mother because of extreme poverty abandoned him and disappeared. A neighbor cared for him a short time and then had to bring him to our New Life Orphanage. His first name is Song (surnames came first in Korea). How appropriate for Christmas!

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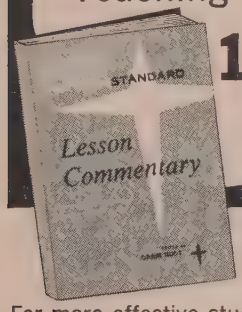

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Virgin Birth

(Continued from page 5)

A great scientist of our generation stated that "it is unscientific to say that a so-called miracle did not happen, for we may someday discover that there are laws not now known to us, which account for what we cannot now understand . . . . The process of living requires decisions that go far beyond anything that science can prove." (*Possibilities Unlimited: A Scientist's Approach to Christianity,* Daniel L. Morris).

Bishop Arthur J. Moore in his *The Mighty Savior* (Abingdon) gives this heartening affirmation: "I am convinced first of all, that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. I believe he was supernaturally born . . . Historic and supernatural Christianity stands or falls with Christ . . . Christianity is built and based from first to finish upon the supernatural Christ."

Such critics as A. Eustace Haydon, in *An Encyclopedia of Religion* compare the biblical account of the virgin birth of our Lord to the birth stories in other religions. After a careful study in this area, it is difficult to see what similarities are to be found in these sources. The pure and wholesome story of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ must not be confused with the base, perverted pagan stories in which the rudest type of sensuality is reflected between gods and human beings.

The troubling silence of Mark and John on the subject is frequently referred to, but it can be pointed out that these books are saturated with the supernaturalism of which the virgin birth is an integral part. Luke gives a straightforward statement of the virgin birth, hence it is included in *those things which are most surely believed among us* . . . (Luke 1:1).

Paul may not allude directly to the virgin birth, but since Luke and Paul were close friends and traveling companions, it is not likely that Paul was ignorant of the virgin birth. It is evident that he accepted the miraculous elements implicit in this important doctrine.

The doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ has been one of the great foundation doctrines from the beginning. It is intimately associated in the mind of the Church with the deity of Jesus Christ.

Edward W. Bauman presents a view, academically, which best represents the biblical facts: "Jesus must be qualitatively different from other men if he is truly the Son of God. He must be free from the weakness and limitations of humanity and he must be free from the sinfulness inherent in natural conception and human birth. Thus he was born miraculously of a virgin in order to establish uniqueness as the Son of God" (*The Life and Teachings of Jesus,* Westminster Press).

The words of the late Bishop Horace M. DuBose should cause us to search our religious conscience: "If . . . the church in America betrays the truth of the Scriptures, as voiced in the Apostles' Creed, both the Church and the nation are doomed to sink in the scale of moral and spiritual righteousness . . . . If those pseudo-scientific theologians who are trying to rewrite the Apostles' Creed should be widely abetted, then another page of darkness must come upon the world's faith. The exposition of the Creed at this time takes on the character of a prophetic 'burden.'"

The words of Harold Paul Sloan, a noted Methodist scholar, are also worthy of careful consideration: "The trouble with much of the profound thinking of the twentieth century is that it is not profound. The trouble with much of the learning in our universities is that it is not learned. We are stumbling over our own shallowness and thinking it is learning. If only we were more profound and more learned, we would stand in wonder, and worship with the shepherds and worship the Babe of Bethelem." (*The Apostles Creed,* Methodist Book Concern, out of print.) Although these statement were made three decades ago, their content indicates their relevance to this topic.

I am grateful I belong to a denomination whose Articles of religion stand so clearly for the validity of the virgin birth: "The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of man." (*The Methodist Discipline,* Para. 62.)

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Evangelical Newsfront

Storm Spares Formosa As President Prays

WHILE NEWSPAPERS said that only a "miracle" could save Formosa from Typhoon Nancy the president, Chiang Kai-Shek, spent hours praying that the island would be spared from the severe storm. As a result the storm completely bypassed the island even though meteorologists said that whatever changes took place the storm would still hit the island with great force.

Many of the people on Formosa had resigned themselves to their fate while the president ordered all possible precautions to be made and then withdrew to his private chapel for prayer. His wife's prayer group which consists of the wives of government leaders also gave themselves to earnest prayer on this matter. When word came that the storm had changed its course a message was sent to the intercessors to "Quit praying and start praising God." The same typhoon later battered Japan and left 320,000 homeless as well as causing untold property damage.

Use Parachute for Church

THOUGH WRENCHED from their homes and forced to move into refugee camps beyond the battle zones the Christian church in Laos is carrying on its way of life of worship and service. This may mean using a tent made from a parachute as a church or a tin cup as a communion cup. Their pastors are men like Ly Lao of the Christian and Missionary Alliance who have been threatened with death by the Communists and escaped with their church members to the refugee centers.

During the past months some 45,000 have had to leave their homes because of the fighting between the government troops and Reds aided by troops from North Viet Nam. Most are from the Xieng Khouang province and about 4,000 of them are Christians who gather for their regular church services. These centers are often just open jungle and the people have none of their personal possessions with them.

Other Christians who were able to get to the city of Vientiane are helping missionaries prepare packets of relief supplies which can be dropped to the refugees from a plane. These packets contain a blanket, cotton cloth for clothing and plastic sheeting to be used for emergency shelter. This is made possible by a relief grant of $5,000 from the Christian and Missionary Alliance missions board in New York. Additional funds are being sought to meet this area of need.

Where to Find

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Gift of Drugs for Korean Orphans

EIGHT THOUSAND Korean orphans will be able to get enough vitamins for the next two years as a result of a $300,000 gift of medical supplies for them. Already on the way to them in Korea is a shipment of six million vitamin tablets, twenty-one thousand cans of vitamin syrup and three thousand pounds of cold tablets from the Christian Medical Society in Oak Park, Illinois.

This gift to the Everett Swanson Evangelistic Association orphanages in Korea is the second major drug shipment by the CMS this year. In September nearly half a million dollars worth of drugs were sent to Africa by the U. S. Navy. From Los Angeles the Korean shipment was handled by the NAE's World Relief Commission in cooperation with the International Cooperation Administration. Leading drug companies donated the materials which were sent.

public affairs

Arrests for Postal Violations Up

A STEPPED-UP enforcement campaign for violation of postal obscenity laws is resulting in a significant increase in arrests and convictions according to postmaster general J. Edward Day. During a recent three month period a total of 98 arrests were made for violations of obscenity laws and 69 convictions were obtained in federal courts. These represented increases of 21 and 16.9 per cent respectively.

The postmaster general also noted a slight decline in the number of arrests for postal fraud schemes though the number of convictions on the same charges were up by nearly fifty per cent.

sunday school

New Goals, Lessons Announced

THE ADOPTION of a new seven-year uniform Sunday school lesson cycle and the announcement of a campaign to double Sunday school enrollments in the next ten years highlighted the mid-October convention of the National Sunday School Association in Detroit.

The new lesson cycle, a product of several years of research by a group of Christian education experts, is the first major challenge by evangelicals to the uniform lessons put out by the International Council of Religious Education. These new lessons which are permament and based on a seven year cycle were brought out because of the ICRE's stress on the social aspects of the gospel to the neglect of personal spiritual applications and of certain portions of the Bible.

The new goal for Sunday school enrollments is 80 million within ten years —approximately double the present number. To meet this goal Sunday schools will have to grow at an even faster pace than in the past 15 years when they grew from enrollments of 20 million to the present 40 million.

Laotian Christian refugees who fled from the Red terror in their villages worship in this tent made from an old parachute at a refugee center.

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missions

Mission Forms International Board

THE INTERNATIONAL Christian Leprosy Mission headquartered in Portland, Ore., recently announced the formation of a new international council as a means of unifying its work in the United States, Canada and the Philippines where it operates under local boards.

This mission was founded 18 years ago under the leadership of Rev. Harold C. Etter and began its work in southwest China on the famed Burma Road. Now the organization has workers in two fields in India, three in Africa, one in South America and one in the Philippines.

united action

Camp Group Changes Name

THE WESTERN CONFERENCE and Camp Association which was started twelve years ago and now has grown into a national organization with most of its members east of the Mississippi river recently changed its name to the Christian Camp and Conference Association. Presently it has 450 members among denominational and independent groups who are banded together to share ideas in conference work and camping.

$400,000 Saved by Church Groups

CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS and individuals who used the facilities of the New York purchasing office of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association were able to save more than $400,000 during the past year. This was made possible through discounts of a centralized buying service for mission boards, churches, schools, pastors, teachers, students, etc. In the coming year it is expected that these discounts will approximate $500,000.

Advance requests for copies of the new EFMA catalog totaled an unprecedented 29,000. The catalog lists hundreds of items for church and mission field use as well as the prices for both domestic and foreign delivery. Automobiles are also available through EMFA and delivery may be arranged all over the nation. Inquiries should be sent to EFMA Purchasing Office, 39 Cortlandt St., New York 7, N. Y.

personalia

A Zulu chief in South Africa has been awarded the 1960 Nobel peace prize for his life-long efforts to use peaceful means to bring about racial equality in his country. He is 68 year old **Albert Luthuli** who was educated in mission schools and taught in one before being elected tribal chief. In recent years he has been held in detention because of his leadership of the now outlawed African Congress party.

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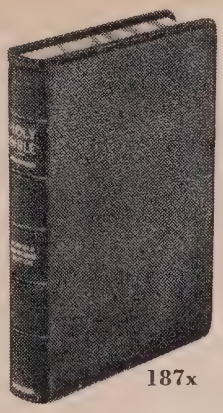

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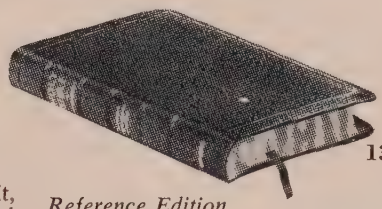

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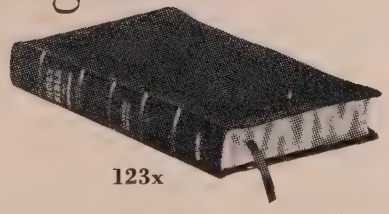

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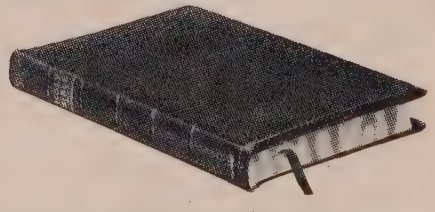

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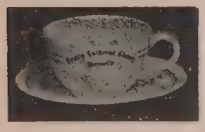

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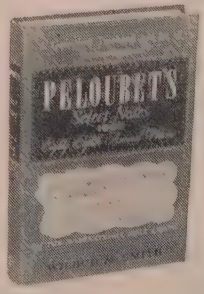

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Rev. Edward C. John of Perry, Mich., has been elected to serve as a new bishop of the Free Methodist church. He succeeds **Bishop C. V. Fairbairn** of McPherson, Kan., who has just retired after serving in that post for 22 years.

Rev. James Kiefer recently resigned his position as general director of the Child Evangelism Fellowship. He came to that post one year ago from missionary service in Germany. Following him as head of CEF is **Jacob DeBruin,** a business man from Kalamazoo, Mich.

Dr. Harold W. Boon, president of Nyack Missionary College, was given an honorary doctor of laws degree by his old school, Houghton College, when he was featured there as a special speaker during their recent annual homecoming celebration.

A native Texan who was raised in an orphanage and worked his way through Baylor University is the new president of that school. He is **Abner V. McCall** who formerly served as a justice in the Texas state supreme court. Baylor is the world's largest Southern Baptist University.

News in Brief

Polish Church Leaders Convicted: Two Polish ministers of the Church of Christ in Poland were convicted by a provincial court of heading an illegal organization—the Church of Christ in Poland—and given a suspended prison sentence. They pleaded not guilty since their denomination has no central authority. This group has eleven churches in Poland.

Refugee Village Dedicated: Late in September a group of 44 apartment buildings which now house 450 German refugees was dedicated near Enkenbach, Germany. Helping to build them were nearly 150 American Mennonite conscientious objectors who contributed their labor as a form of alternative service to military duty. Because of this contribution there was a saving of $1,000 per building.

German Baptist Laymen Evangelize: A new evangelistic thrust is being made in Germany by teams of Baptist lay people known as "Rufers" or callers. These teams consist of students, white collar workers and trades people who give a year to a public ministry of street preaching and visitation evangelism. This work was begun after World War II to reach people outside the church.

African Sect Leader Visits Israel: Joseph Diangienda, the head of a Congolese sect called "The Church of Christ on Earth Through the Prophet, Simon Kimbangu," recently visited Israel as a guest of that government. This sect has a membership reported at over two million and is quite legalistic in nature. Its founder, Simon Kimbangu, died in prison under Belgian rule after being sentenced for alleged rebellion.

Correction: The October issue of Action listed Dr. August Hintz as chairman of the executive committee for the Billy Graham Crusade in Chicago next spring. He is vice-chairman of that committee while Mr. H. J. Taylor, a Chicago businessman, is the general chairman of the group.

RECORD REVIEWS

■ CHRISTMAS albums usually get out a little late for reviewers to give them mention during the season in which they appear, but we'd like to tell you about three—two released last year and one a current release.

■ THE NEW one is on the Console label (a division of Supreme Recordings) and features Paul Mickelson in *A Christmas Concert at the Console* (CM 5005). All the Christmas favorites are here as only Paul Mickelson can interpret them using the full organ keyboard and the added beauty of chimes.

Joy to the World, What Child Is This? Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, I Heard the Bells, It Came Upon the Midnight Clear, O Holy Night, The First Noel, O Tannenbaum, Away in a Manger, O Little Town of Bethlehem, Silent Night, O Come All Ye Faithful.

■ OUR PICK of the Christmas albums, frankly, is Mel Johnson's *Songs of Christmas* released last year by Faith Records. Mel's beautiful tenor voice carries the weight of the selections, of course, but the choir directed by Doug Fisher gives delightful help. In case you don't find this one in the store, you may order from Box 411, Arlington Heights, Ill.

O Holy Night, Gesu Bambino, Sweet Little Jesus Boy, The Holy City, Have You Ever Seen the Star, The Lord's Prayer, Go Tell It on the Mountains, Angels from the Realms of Glory, Away in a Manger, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, Noel, Silent Night.

■ FRANK BOGGS (he of the superb bass voice) wrote the music to a poem by Christina Rosetti and used it as the title song of a Word Records Christmas album, *Love Came Down at Christmas* (WST-8080-LP. He is joined by the Concert Orchestra of London and the Paul Mickelson Choir in this outstanding album.

Love Came Down at Christmas, O Holy Night, What Child Is This? While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks, Sweet Little Jesus Boy, Medley of Carols, A King Is Born, O Come O Come Emmanuel, Once in Royal David's City, I Heard the Bells, Jesus Jesus Rest Your Head, The Birthday of a King.

■ COMPOSER, VOCALIST, instrumentalist, John Peterson is all of these things and in a new Zondervan release, *"Sing"cerely Yours* (ZLP-547) he sings twelve of his own compositions. It is an unpretentious album which in itself is a recommendation since it doesn't depend on gimmicks to make it good. But you can't beat the solid combination of good compositions, a smooth baritone voice and the versatile arrangements of Scott Douglass.

I'm Just a Singing Pilgrim, Surely Goodness and Mercy, God Is There, Who Cares, No Other Song, God Has a Big Big Heart, In My Heart, Sheltered in the Love of Jesus, A Willing Heart, How Can It Be? There's Not a Day That Passes, Isn't the Love of Jesus Something Wonderful?

■ ONLY ONCE has this reviewer seen an autoharp—a chord-strumming string instrument—and never heard it featured in an album until Capitol Records recently released *Rita Faye's Autoharp* (T 1606). Unfortunately, it is not a consistently good album, having its ups and down. One of the "ups" is the lively rendition of "Are You Washed in the Blood?"; the recitation along with "Beyond the Sunset" completely misses the mark.

Are Ye Able? Whispering Hope, Beyond the Sunset, Showers of Blessings, In the Garden, Are You Washed in the Blood? It Is No Secret, Beautiful Isle of Somewhere, There'll Be Peace in the Valley, Where No One Stands Alone, The Three Bells, Love Lifted Me.

■ Excellent harmony and spiritual quality characterize an album featuring four young men known as *The Telecasters* (CV-1028). Singing on this Crown V release are Don Crawford, Sam Seymor, Steve Musto and Bob Stratton. The fellows do an exceptional job with "When He Shall Come."

I'm Gonna Rise, When He Shall Come, Heart Medley, Near to the Heart of God, My Yesterday, It Was for You, My Sins Are Gone, Day and Night, Garden of Love, I Was There When It Happened, My Saviour's Love, I Am with You.

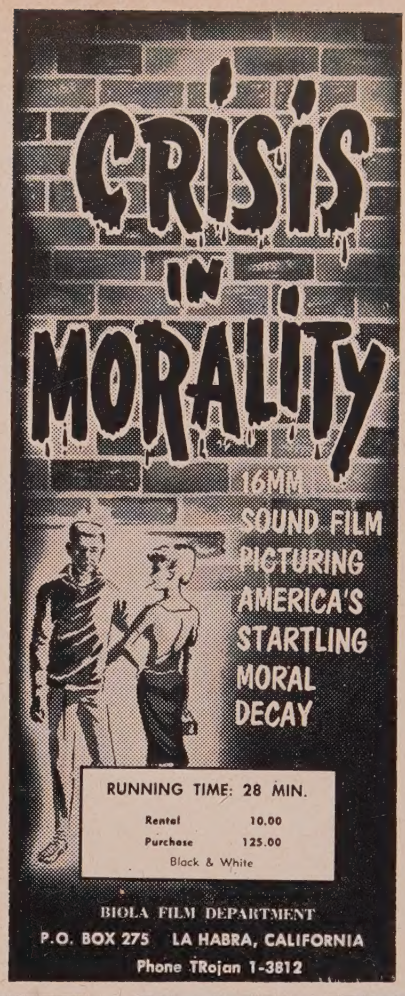
■ OUTSTANDING! Even though half of it is in Japanese, that's the only way to describe the effort of Word Records to capture the *Music of the Tokyo Christian Crusade* (WST-8094-LP). The 85-piece orchestra directed by Ralph Carmichael, the 1,000 voice choir, soloists such as Fague Springman and Jimmie McDonald—all are great in this professionally-arranged stereo release. You are bound to be thrilled as you hear the great choir sing such classics as "How Great Thou Art," "Stand Up for Jesus" and the "Hallelujah Chorus."

■ WE ARE GLAD to present another album under the Heart Warming Records label again this month. This one features the *Tennessee Temple A Cappella Choir* of Chattanooga (No. LPHF 1703), a fine group with a good spiritual repertoire. Six of the thirteen songs presented were composed by Charles F. Weigle.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, Thy Word Is a Light, I Sing of Thee, Bless the Lord O My Soul, A Garden of Roses, A Miracle of Love, I Have Found a Hiding Place, Forever Worthy Is Thy Lamb, Wondrous Grace Hath Blessed My Soul, Jesus I Mighty, When I Come to the Edge of Eternity, Blessed Redeemer, Go to Dark Gethsemane.

■ THE ARTISTS on the new Diadem Productions album, *I'll Live for Jesus* (DLP 136), are all young, but what they have produced will be a delight to older folks as well. The album features the "Three Nieces and Susie" of Aunt Bertha's Children Bible Hour. We were delightfully pleased with this album and believe that you will be when you hear it.

I'll Live for Jesus, I Have a Contented Heart, In My Heart There Rings a Melody, How Long Has It Been? Somebody Bigger Than You and I, You Never Mentioned Him to Me, O Be Careful, What You Are, How About Your Heart? Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Yes I Know, The Old Account, Teach Me Lord to Wait, Say Goodbye to the World, Lord What Will We Do, Amen Street and Hallelujah Square, Medley of Songs.



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Re-ACTION

COMMENTS FROM READERS

Missionary Subscriptions for Action

To the Editor:

Enclosed is a check for $24.00 which is to be used for sending Action magazine to missionaries who ask for it but cannot afford to subscribe.

MRS. NORRIS BARTLETT
Meredith, N. H.

To the Editor:

I just read the Editor at Random column in the October issue of Action. The enclosed check of $10.00 is for missionary subscriptions to Action.

CLARENCE DAHLKE
Port Orchard, Wash.

To the Editor:

I have received Action magazine for many years and deeply appreciate your kindness in keeping my name on the list of missionaries who get it.

It is gratifying to note the extensive work of the NAE in its many fields of service for Christ. I wish we had some similar organization in South Africa which would strengthen the fellowship of evangelical Protestant churches.

E. LEVINE
Johannesburg, Transvaal
South Africa

Editor's Note: It is most gratifying to see the warm response to our suggestion that readers might help us share Action with missionaries overseas. Equally encouraging is the sincere thanks for this ministry from missionaries such as Mr. Levine in South Africa. You may send your gifts for this purpose to Action, Box 28, Wheaton, Ill.

Opportunity for Service

To the Editor:

I have been trying for a number of months to find some one to help us get a small rural church going and have been unable to do so. Would Action be able to put me in touch with some sincere young man who has a genuine "calling" for the benefit of us and the glory of God?

JOHN F. STOLL
R.F.D. No. 1
East Peoria, Ill.

Editor's Note: Anyone interested in this opportunity for Christian service should contact Mr. Stoll directly.

ACTION Gets Action

To the Editor:

Please send me four copies of the October issue of Action. The articles on Sunday school and youth work are going to get some ACTION at our church!

LEONARD W. POLSON
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Omaha, Nebr.

To the Editor:

The article by Gunnar Hoglund in the October issue of Action is both instructive and challenging. As director of Christian education I would appreciate having copies of the article for distribution in our church as a challenge to the hearts and lives of our members and church workers.

RON WIDMAN
Fountain Avenue Baptist Church
Hollywood, Calif.

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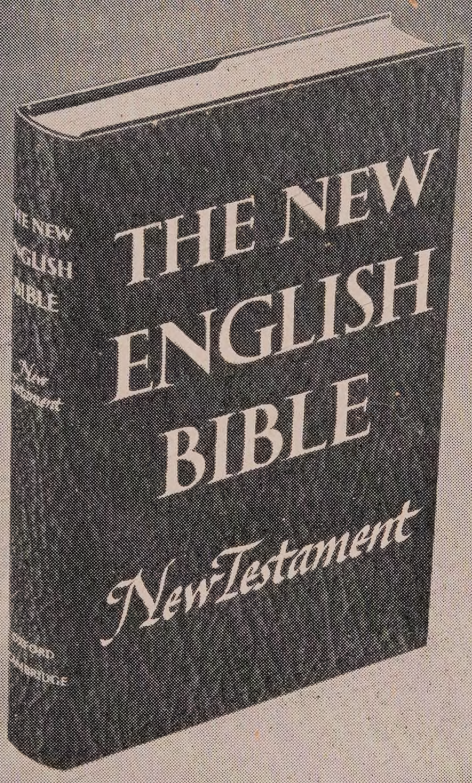

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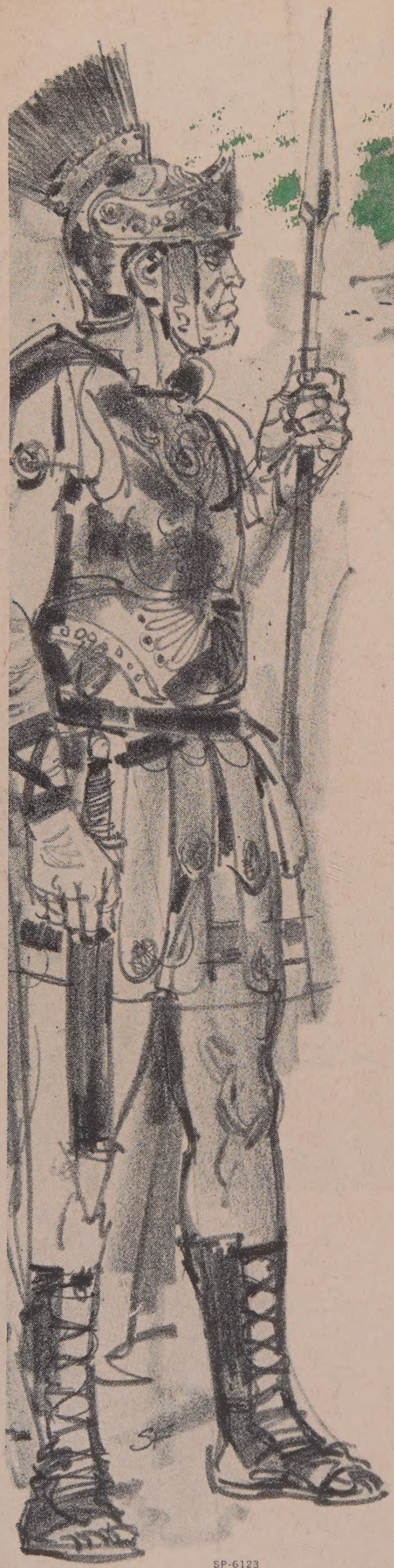

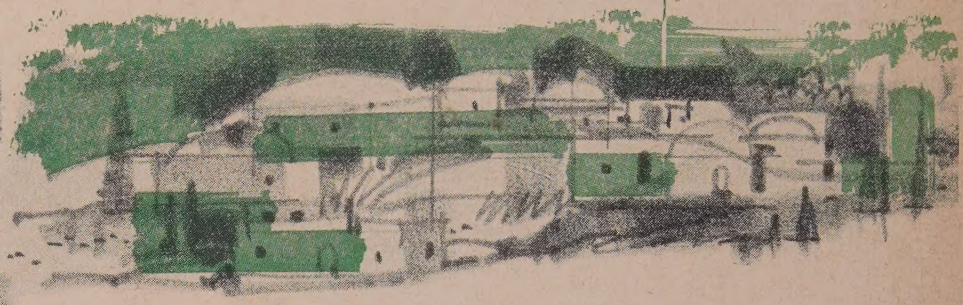

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